

Rugby Football League

Social Media sites – a guide to
best practice

Why do we need guidance?

- We have had requests for guidance
- Clubs see the benefits for advertising the club, training times, fundraising events etc.
- We can connect quickly (and cheaply) with the our players/parents/supporters
- We can showcase our achievements

However.....

Why are we here?

Social media sites have their **dangers**

To you

To children

To our clubs

This session looks at how you can avoid those dangers and still use social media sites to our benefit

What are the dangers?

The dangers to you, the players and the club fall into 3 main areas:

- Compromising your own safety and the safety of your players
- Damage to your clubs reputation
- Bullying

Positive outcomes

- We all want our club to be seen in the best light
- We want more players to join our club - they have a choice
- We wanted to be respected in the community
- We want any funding that is available – we want sponsors to ‘like’ how we advertise ourselves

Negative Outcomes

- Facebook can be used to promote poor sportsmanship – win at all costs ‘smash them’ postings
- Prospective players/parents look at the site and do not like the ‘message’ it gives out – it does not promote a fun and enjoyable environment
- The club gets a ‘bad name’ because of negative postings by members

Bullying

- Young people can use Facebook to target and bully others
- Posting photos
- Slating the opposition before/after a game
- Inciting violence
- Harassment on-line

Dangers to Children

- Putting children at risk by giving out too much information about them
- A 'fun' photo may not seem so funny to the child
- Poor method of communicating specific information to a child – misinterpretation
- Viewing inappropriate photos/posts

Personal Accounts

If you use your own personal Facebook account to contact your U18 players you are putting yourself at risk

Best practice – Personal Account

- Set your privacy settings so that your players cannot see your personal account
- Set up a separate account for contact with players – better still a club Facebook page - use only for ‘simple’ messages, changes to training times etc
- Speak to the parents for specific messages

Best practice

- Think before you act and never post whilst tired, drunk or emotional – wait until the next day
- Use social media to enhance yourself and the club
- Watch your language – will it cause offence?

Best practice – Club Site

- Don't put personal details on your sites that may make a child vulnerable
- Block users who contact you to harass
- Don't link to other sites that may post inflammatory comments
- Monitor the site for misuse by players

Remember

- Social Media should enhance what we do
- RESPECT for all
- We need to monitor the postings
- Challenge inappropriate postings
- ‘Block’ users if necessary
- We should promote fair play, fun and the family game